

1. (Amended) A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process comprising
commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of water, and a binder
consisting of a binding effective amount of a polymer selected from the group consisting
of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of a weak
acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and
mixtures thereof to produce a mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

A4 B 3. (Amended) The process of Claim 1 wherein said metallic ore is iron. ^{ore}

8. (Amended) A process of agglomerating iron ore, said process comprising
commingling said iron ore with a moistening effective amount of water, and a binder
consisting of a binding effective amount of guar and a binding effective amount of citric
acid to produce a mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

A5 9. (Amended) Pellets prepared in accordance with the process of Claim 1.

A6 B 11. (Amended) The pellets of claim 9 wherein said metallic ore is iron. ^{ore}

17. (Amended) A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process
comprising commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of
water, and a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of a polymer selected
from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof and a
binding effective amount of the salt of a weak acid, to produce an agglomerating
mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

19. (Amended) The process of Claim 17 wherein said metallic ore is iron ore.

20. (Amended) The process of Claim 17 wherein said salt of a weak acid is selected from the group consisting of salts of citric acid, salts of tartaric acid, salts of malic acid, salts of fumaric acid, salts of lactic acid and mixtures thereof.

21. (Amended) The process of Claim 17 wherein said polymer and said salt of a weak acid together are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt.% of said agglomerating mixture.

22. (Amended) Pellets comprised of metallic ore, and a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of ^a polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives, starch, modified starch, starch derivatives and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of the salt of a weak acid.

24. (Amended) The pellets of claim 22 wherein said metallic ore is iron ore.

Please add the following new claims:

- 37. A process of agglomerating metallic ore in the presence of water which comprises mixing said metallic ore with a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of starch, starch derivatives, modified starch and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective

amount of the salt of a weak acid to produce a mixture, and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

38. The process of Claim 37 wherein the metallic ore is iron ore, and said salt of a weak acid is selected from the group consisting of salts of citric acid, salts of malic acid, salts of tartaric acid and mixtures thereof.

39. A process of agglomerating metallic ore in the presence of water which comprises mixing said ore with a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of starch, modified starch, starch derivatives and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof to produce a mixture, and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

40. A binder composition useful for the agglomeration of metal containing ores consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives, and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof.

41. The process of Claim 1 wherein said guar derivative is selected from the group consisting of carboxymethyl guar, hydroxypropyl guar and mixtures thereof.

42. Pellets prepared in accordance with the process of Claim 17.

43. The process of Claim 17 wherein said guar derivatives are selected from the group consisting of carboxymethyl guar, hydroxypropyl guar and mixtures thereof.

44. The process of Claim 37 wherein said polymer and said salt of a weak acid together are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt% of the mixture.

45. The process of Claim 39 wherein said polymer and said weak acid are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt% of the mixture.

46. A binder composition useful for the agglomeration of metal containing ores consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives, and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of a salt of a weak acid.

47. A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process comprising commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of water, and adding to the ore a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of a polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof to produce a mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.